8/11, 71

Dear Harold,

Thanks for your latest mailing, which arrived today.

I accept your words about your writings and problems, and I think I have been sympathetic to those problems. Right now, aside from your style, my real concern is with organization and it is here I hope to help you most. I greatly appreciate your invitation (solicited as it was) and I will be more than glad to come down the week of 8/23 as you suggest, during which time I can read what you have written. I will be reading it primarily from the standpoint of: is it well organized and do you get your point across. If either is not right, I will try to correct it. I can come down that monday (8/23) but I must be home by Friday afternoon, for I have to be in NY for a wedding that Sat., 8/28) That leaves me enough time, I would think, especially since I will devote my time to the one project.

Your concern over the Belin correspondence has evoked my own concern, now that you've got me thinking as I wasn't before. Frankly, I expected no gain in terms of new information or confessions. I merely did not want to let this man's sanctimony and utter (if even unconscious) dishonesty go unanswered, because I felt it an insult to me and other critics, and I also did not feel content to give him the peace of mind of no response. I don't think this has taken me further than I wish. Right now, I wouldn't write him another letter like that 6-page monster. That one was enough for me. But I've merely presented him with things a) already long made public in the critics' early works and b) which, if he is aware of them, he refuses to face. The gain, I suppose, is at least making it harder for a criminal and a bastard to live with himself.

It seems to me this notion has been behind many of your own letters, such as those to Ball. Perhaps you made offers which I did not, but realisticly I would not expect any of these guys to accept the offers (except in the case of the WC members themselves, who have much more at stake and were far less aware of their vices).

I just had a long talk with Sylvia about it, and she was not quite so concerned and, in fact, rather pleased with the correspondence. She too expects nothing substantial from Belin, but she does expect him to "crack-up" because she believes that his absolutely hysterical defense of himself indicates that he has some conscience and lives with himself merely by living in the dreamworld of the Warren Report. She really thinks, and I am inclined to agree, that, unlike Specter, Belin can't accept the fact that he was alligned with such evil doings and men, the fact that he was handmaiden to the administration which made the war he now claims to abhor. So the recent things (including publication of Sylvia's article) make it that much more difficult for him to live with himself. Also, Sylvia would like to send a copy of her article to the ABA and ask that Belin be disbarred, which I think is a very good idea. It may produce absolutely no tangible benefit for us. But in the spirit that <u>some</u> justice must be done, I cannot see any real harm in it. Likewise, I now think that if my book is published, I will send copy to ABA and ask that Specter be disbarred, plus a copy to the Academy of Forensic Sciences and ask that appropriate measures be taken against Fisher.

You are definately right, though, about the conditions he has set forth. I think it would be best to write him a letter setting forth how I will interpret and obide by his conditions. A draft of that letter is enclosed and if you think it is the right thing to do, I'll send it. I anticipate that he will either refuse to have any further correspondence because of my "sensationalist" views, or will provide some half-assed "answer" to my original questions. Of course, when I stipulate my own conditions, he might totally back out. I anticipate winding up with a letter citing his constant refusal to answer (or answer meaningfully), his attempts to hide our exchange, plus his now published "response" to Sylvia's article, and basicly ask him how he can live with himself. It is not as if writing such letters was an imposition on me, and I think there is, in fact, absolutely nothing wrong with writing such letters.

Best,
Howard